

*The PROTESTANT-SUCCESSION refus'd by
Men, but own'd of GOD:*

A 12
S E R M O N

Preach'd at

Little St. Hellens,
TO THE
S O C I E T Y

Which Supports the LORD'S-DAY
Morning-Lecture there:

Upon *May 28. 1719.*

The Anniversary of the KING'S Birth-Day.

By BENJAMIN ROBINSON,
Minister of the Gospel.

Publish'd at the Request of the Society, and of the
Ministers who heard it.

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the year of God

A
SERMON

Preached at

Little St. James

TO THE

SOCIETY

Which supports the B.D.Y.

Morning-Lecture there:

Upon



The Anniversary of the B.D.Y. Birth-Day

By BENJAMIN JOHNSON

Minister of the Gospel

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PSAL. CXVIII. 22, 23, 24.

The Stone which the Builders refused, is become the Head-stone of the Corner : This is the LORD's doing, it is marvellous in our Eyes : This is the Day which the LORD hath made, we will rejoyce and be glad in it.



very plain.

HERE is no Difficulty in the Text, except only that the first Words are a little clouded with a *Metaphor*; which when they are clear'd of, all will be

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THE whole *Metaphor* is founded in a *Building*: Where there must both be *Builders*, and there must be *Materials*, whether they be *Stones*, or whatever else. Again, in the *Building* itself, there must be several *Places* or *Parts*, both more and less useful and honourable: (Not to enter *within the Walls*, much less to take a *View* of the *Furniture* within, which yet other *Texts* would lead us to, 2 *Tim.* ii. 20. *In a great House, there are not only Vessels of Gold, and of Silver, but also of Wood and of Earth, &c.* But in the *Building* itself, there must be several *Parts*:) To pass by all the rest, there are to be *Corners* in a *Building*; these do unite and strengthen the *Parts* that meet in them: And if there be also *Stones* in the *Corner*, they do not only give a greater *Strength*, but they add no small *Beauty* and *Lustre* to the *Building*: And, to say no more, among the *Corner-stones*, one is usually chosen out to be the *Head-stone*, and which for the *Security* of the *Whole*, and as being the fittest for it, is laid at the *Foundation*. Now this is the *Stone* of which the *Text* speaks, even the *Head-stone of the Corner*, without directing our *Eye* to any *Thing* else in the *Building*.

To proceed therefore; The *Building* before

fore us, may either be understood to mean the *Church* or *State*; for they both are *Buildings*: The *Church*, is the *House of God*, 1 Tim. iii. 15. And the *State*, is the *Structure of Men*, ἀνθρώπων κτίσις, 1 Pet. ii. 13. And accordingly, if the Building before us, be understood to mean the *Church*, then the *Head-stone* of the Corner is *CHRIST*; If we refer it to the *State*, then this *Head-stone* must be the *King* or *Sovereign*, or whoever it is that is *Supreme* in it.

WE shall therefore consider the Words, as they may relate

to { *Christ*, the *King* and *Lord* of the *Church*.
David, at that Time the *King* of the *Israelitish* Nation: and by a just Accommodation to,
 { *Our now Reigning Sovereign*. For they are strictly true of all the Three.

I. AND it can, it will be no Offence, That our *Lord Jesus Christ* should be first spoken of: He is the Stone which the *Builders* rejected.

I. THAT He was rejected, we are expressly told: Nay, it was told before-hand, by way of Prophecy; that, when He came into the

World, this might be no just Prejudice against Him, *He is despised and rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief; and we hid (as it were) our Faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed him not, Isa. liii. 3.* And when our Lord Jesus was visibly among 'em, his Citizens (those who were his Subjects) *bated Him: and (O vile Impudence!) they sent this Message to Him, WE WILL NOT HAVE THIS Man TO REIGN OVER US, Luke xix. 14.* Nor, did they only refuse Him the *Dominion*; but they envy'd Him his very *Life*: *This is the Heir, (say they) come let us kill Him, and let us seize on his Inheritance, Matth. xxi. 38.* And, when this small Degree of Pity was ready be shewn Him, [to save his Life] they all cry out, *Away with this Man, crucify Him, crucify Him, Luke xxiii. 18, 21.*

2. NOR was it only by the *Mobb*, the Ignorant and Unthinking, that our Lord JESUS was thus us'd; but it was by the *Builders* themselves: They did not only refuse Him in his proper Character, obstinately and to the last; but they glory'd in it, *Have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on Him? John. vii. 48.* And it is certain, they gave their Vote for the Murder of Him; for among the *Voices* that were very loud upon that

that Occasion, we find those of *the Chief Priests* expressly mention'd, *Luke xxiii. 23.* And it is rather more than probable, that the great Men [*the Builders*] among 'em at that time, did not only by their own *Example*; but also by *Bribes*, and other Arts, move the *Common People* to do what they did, *Mark xv. 11.* Thus was our Lord *Jesus refus'd*, when He was here visibly among Men: And the very *Builders* themselves refus'd Him, they who (it might have been expected) should have known Him better. Here I would observe, That they *refus'd Him*, not only as One, whom they look'd upon to be

{ *A Man, a meer Man; but also*
A very mean Man; and
A very ill Man.

(1). THEY refus'd Him as *a Man*, and One whom they accounted to be *a meer Man*: Had they judg'd Right in the Case, their Refusal of Him would have been very just: And they had then said well, when they said, *We will not have this Man to reign over us*, *Luke xix. 14.* They were expecting One to *redeem Israel*, that should appear gloriously among 'em, and like *the Son of God*;

God: When He comes, *He has no Form* [no such Form] *or Comeliness*; and when they saw Him, there was *no Beauty that they should desire Him*, Isaiah liii. 2.

(2.) THEY refus'd Him as *a mean Man*: One of no Rank, no Family or Character; one of the very meanest of the People. They say of Him, *Is not this the Carpenter's Son*, Matth. xiii. 55. *Nay, is not this Man himself a Carpenter*, Mark vi. 8. a sorry Mechanick; One who is fain to get his Bread with the sweat of his Brows: And upon that very Reason, they were *offended at Him*, Matth. xiii. 57. Mark vi. 3. They treat Him with answerable Language, [*This Fellow*]; One of no Account in Comparison with *Moses*: *We know* (say they) *that God spake unto Moses*: We are not asham'd to own ourselves his Disciples; He was truly a *great Man*, and bred in a very great and a polite Court: But as for *this Fellow* (meaning *Christ*) *we know not whence he is*, John ix. 29. They knew it very well, so far as they thought the mention of it would turn to his Reproach: But this is yet with more Contempt, to say, His Original is *mean* to the last Degree; so very *obscure and base*, that none knows (or thinks it worth his while to know) whence he sprang. Thus did they
treat

treat Our Lord JESUS, as a very *mean Man*.
Nor only so: But

(3.) THEY did refuse him, as a very *ill Man*:
He was, in their Account, a *Glutton*, and a
Wine-bibber; they were not asham'd to call
Him so; and as a Proof of this, they add, He
is a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*, Matth.
xi. 19. In a good Sense, He was truly so:
He was a *Friend to all sort of Sinners*; the best
Friend that ever poor Sinners had: but this
they intended in the Sense that was to carry
the greatest Scandal with it: He was the
Friend, i. e. the Companion of such; and fit
only to keep them Company. If this will not
convey sufficient Prejudice against Him, they
add, that He is a *Traytor*, and an *Enemy to*
Cæsar; and those who do any Way favour
him or stand *His Friend*, for that very Reason
are not, nor shall be look'd upon as, *Cæsar's*
Friend, John xix. 12. He was with them
a *Blasphemer*, tho' for no other Reason, but
only because He (being a Man) *made him-*
self [i. e. own'd himself to be] *God*, as He
truly was, *John* x. 33. Nay, they would
fain have it to be thought, that He was *One*
who dealt with the Devil: When it was not to
be denied that a great Miracle was wrought
by Him, they still say and insist upon it,
This Fellow does not cast out Devils, but by
Beelzebub,

Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils, Matth. xii.

24. Thus was *Christ* not only *refus'd* by the *Builders* of that Time; but hated, despis'd, treated with the highest Expressions of Odium and of Contempt. But after this, and notwithstanding this, it follows

2. THAT yet *He* is become the *HEAD-STONE* of the *Corner*: This is *One* great Article, if not the *principal One*, throughout the *New Testament*: Our Lord *Jesus* [the *Redeemer*] for under that Character, not as the *Supreme God*, we now are to consider and speak of Him: I say, as such *He* is now *exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour*, *Acts* x. 36. *He* is *highly exalted*, and has a *Name above every* [given, or derived] *Name*, whether upon *Earth* or in *Heaven*, *Phil.* ii. 9, 10, 11. So that the whole of this Scripture was plainly fulfilled in *Christ*: And to *Him* we find the Words of referr'd in the *New Testament*; and referr'd in such a Manner as will not suffer us to question, but that Our Lord *Jesus* was *principally* intended by the Spirit of *GOD* who inspir'd the *Psalmist*; whether the Prophet himself could then see so far, or not. See *Matth.* xxi. 42. *Mark* xii. 10, 11. *Luke* xx. 17. *Acts* iv. 11. *Ephes.* ii. 20. 1 *Pet.* ii. 6, 7.

II. BUT

II. But tho' the Text does *principally* refer to *Christ*; yet it was (no doubt) first, and *most immediately* intended of *David* himself as *King* of the *Israelitish* Nation. And here it was every tittle of it true.

I. It is very plain, that *David* was *not* presently owned, and for a long Time he was *not own'd universally*: He was long *refus'd* while in the *Succession* only; by some very obstinately *after his Accession* to the Throne. The State of the Case we shall give you in a narrow Compass.

DAVID was *nam'd*, even by God himself, *for the Succession*; and the Prophet by Divine Direction did *anoint* him to it: Whereupon he plainly stood next in the *Succession*; and had all the *Right to succeed*, that his *Predecessor* had to *ascend* the Throne, 1 Sam. x. i. comp. with 1 Sam. xvi. 12, 13. This they well knew, or might have known: For he was not only *anointed in the midst of his Brethren*, but from that Time *the Spirit of the Lord came* (very remarkably) *upon Him*: They must be very careless, or worse than so, who did not observe in him, that undaunted *Courage*, that great *Military Conduct*, those never-failing *Successes*; which
C shew'd

shew'd that *the Spirit of God* was upon him, and the *Hand of the Lord* was with him which way soever he went ; that he was every way fitted and form'd for the Government, and that he was design'd by God himself to it ; and that nothing in all the World could so much contribute to the Safety and Greatness of that Nation, and to make them on all Accounts an happy People, as this *Succession*. But still this was *the Stone, which the Builders of that Time refus'd*.

To pass the vile Abuses which were then put upon the *Successor* by *Nabal*, and other such rude and unmannerly Fools, who would not seem to know him, *1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11*. Who on all Occasions were ready to say.
 “ *Who is David, and who is the Son of Jesse?*
 “ *And who are they that be with him, that*
 “ *are his Friends? They are Strangers, they*
 “ *are Foreigners, Men whom we know not*
 “ *whence they be: We have no Occasion for*
 “ *such COME-OVERS*”. I say, to pass by such Insults as these: I shall principally take Notice of the Treatment which he met with from *Saul*, his immediate Predecessor in the Kingdom; and from those that were in the Ministry in the latter Part of his Life and Reign, especially from the Time of *Jonathan's* disgrace, *1 Sam. xx. 30, 33*. Now
 does

does that *King* look upon his *Successor* with a very evil Eye: He does no longer esteem him (as he had before, and still had Reason to do; and as the wisest and best Men in the Nation still declar'd him to be) the *King's* most faithful *Servant* and his surest and most useful *Friend*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 14. So far from it, that now he cannot speak or think of him, but with a Mixture of *Rage* and *Horror*: Now every one who is a *Friend* to the *Succession*, he thinks for that very Reason, is in a Conspiracy against *himself*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 7, 8. What strange Words were those, which *Saul* spake to his *Servants* that stood about him, *Hear now* (says he) ye *Benjamites*, *Will the Son of Jesse give every One of you Fields and Vineyards; and make you all Captains of Thousands, and Captains of Hundreds; that all of you have conspired against me, &c.* tho' all that he had to charge upon any of 'em, only was, That they still favour'd the *Successor*; and were not forwrad to go into the Measures that must have put an End to his *Hopes*, if not also to his very *Life*.

NAY, after this, when the *Philistines* (the old, the inveterate, the implacable Enemies of *Israel*) were at War with him and his *ALLIES*; and when this *David* had successfully fought

ought against them; instead of strengthening his Hands, as in *true Policy*, he should have done; and making the best Advantages of this Defeat for himself and his Successor (strange!) he now privately directs his Troops to forbear the Enemy, and distress *David*, 1 Sam. xxiii. 8.—xxiv. 2. —xxvi. 2. Thus does he all that in him lay, to weaken and ruin him Abroad, and to put an End to his Hopes of the Kingdom.

ABOUT the same time, another most amazing Step was taken nearer Home; to disclaim, and as much as possible, to destroy his very *Relation to the Crown*, 1 Sam. xxv. 44. This was done with a Design to make him despicable not *at Court* only, but throughout the Land.

YET all this while, at times, fair Words were given him; and the King himself does own his Relation to him, and his *Right of Succession*, 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, 20. —xxvi. 21, 25. tho' this might only be with an Intent to quiet the Minds of the honest and hearty Friends of the *Succession*; and to gain some farther Time, in order the more effectually to defeat and overthrow it.

NOR must we charge all this upon that *Prince* alone; his *Ministry* in Justice ought to bear a Part, if not the greatest Part: By
them

them he was deluded and misled: He had then about him (however they came to be about him) such as were proper *Tools*, ready to push him by their rash Advices upon these *impolitricks* as well as *dishonourable* and *unjust* Attempts. I shall only take notice of One or Two.

THERE was *Doeg* the *Edomite*, (for whatever Reason he was so call'd) this Man by his Treachery and Falsehood had rais'd himself to the Character of a *mighty Man*, Psal. lii. 1. The Place in which we find him, is that of *the chiefest of the Herdsmen* that belong'd to *Saul*, 1 Sam. xxi. 7. The Title and the Employment, may seem mean to us; but it was then much otherwise; And considering that the *Riches* of that Age and Nation did very principally consist in the Possessions which they had of *that Kind*; he may well be look'd upon, as *the Chief* of those who then belong'd to THE TREASURY. He was a Man made for all manner of Mischief; fawning, but false-hearted; and what is still worse, was, that he had learn'd to cover and carry on the basest and most abominable Designs, with a *Masque*, and an Appearance of *Religion*.

BESIDES him, there was also *Abner*, at that Time the GENERAL, or Captain of the Host,

Host, 1 Sam. xxvi. 5. This is *that Abner*, who (in the Time of *Saul's* Reign) did once fail in his Duty to his Place and Sovereign so egregiously; that it is very strange it did not prove a fatal and irreparable Neglect; and that it was not attended with the Loss both of *the King's Crown and Life*, 1 Sam. xxvi. 16. It was this *Abner* too, who (whether he join'd at first in Proclaiming *David* the Successor, or not; yet) some Time after the Death of *Saul*, did set up the then Pretender *Ishbosheth*, the Son of *Saul*, to be their King, 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9. and rais'd more than one Rebellion in his Favour, 2 Sam. iii. 1. tho' all the while he knew, and at last upon a particular Occasion own'd, that *David* was appointed of God to *the Succession*; and that his Title was recogniz'd and strengthen'd by *the Oath of God*, 2 Sam. iii. 9, 10. And is it at all strange, that the *Person* of the Successor was treated very ill; and his future *Claims* to the Crown grew weak and tottering; when such Men as these were at the Helm.

HOWEVER, upon the sudden and unexpected Death of *Saul*, the Successor *David* ascends the *Throne*; and (for any thing that does appear, for some Time to the contrary) very peaceably: Yet in a little Time, the Sacred History makes mention of some, who did

did *insult* him; and did appear in open *Arms against him*. It would not now be very strange, if the same Persons in a former Reign, had made the loudest Pretensions to *Loyalty*, and cry'd up such an unbounded *Submission* to the Sovereign, as went beyond the Lengths of any Men of Conscience or of Honour.

BESIDES *Abner's* Rebellion, in Favour of the Pretender *Ishbosheth*, of which we have already spoken: We find *King David* was *weakened* and distress'd by some *great Men* that were about him, and who in their general Character had been, if they were not still, his *heartly Friends*: of these he feelingly complains, 2 Sam. iii. 39. *I am (says he) this Day weak, tho' anointed King; and these Men, the Sons of Zeruah, be too hard for me.*

To this might be added, the Repulse he met with from the *Jebusites*, who placed their greatest Confidence in the Scituation of their Country, rocky and inaccessible (as they thought) like the *Highlands of Scotland*, 2 Sam. 5, 6. 1 Chron. xi. 5. The open Rebellion of *Absalom* and *Achitophel*, 2 Sam. xv. 16, and 17. The vile Insults of *Shimei*, the Son of *Gera*, 2 Sam. xv. 5, 6, 7, 8. And to finish all, as they hop'd, *Sheba*, no way discourag'd with all the Disappointments their former Treasons

Treasons had met with ; now blows the Trumpet of Rebellion afresh, and causes open Proclamation to be made in these audacious Words, *We have no Part in David, neither have we Inheritance in the Son of Jesse : Every Man to his Tents, O Israel.* 2 Sam. xx. 1, 2. All this was besides the Troubles, that the *Philistines*, the *Ammonites*, and other foreign Enemies gave him in the Course of his Reign.

YET notwithstanding, *David*, who was thus despis'd, thus oppos'd, and thus refus'd by the *Builders* [the great Men] both at Home and Abroad ; is favour'd still and own'd by Him, who is *the first Builder* and Founder of States and Kingdoms, even *the Great God*. They did all they could, to prevent his ever coming to the Throne ; and to distress, nay, even to depose him after his Accession : But *David* was their King notwithstanding : He liv'd their King, and reign'd over them (gloriously) forty Years, 1 Kings ii. 11. And at last, he dy'd their King : and left his Son *Solomon* peaceably to succeed him in the Throne. Thus *the Stone which the Builders refus'd, did become the Head-stone of the Corner*. And the Reason is plain, He was *God's King*, chosen and anointed of *God* ; and *God* did remarkably interpose on his Behalf :

Behalf: *He set Him as his King, upon the holy Hill of Zion, Psal. 2. 6. He first set Him there; and 'tis as evident all along that He supported Him there, in spite of all the Rage of his Enemies, and the numerous and dangerous Combinations against Him. The whole Book of Psalms speaks every where to this Purpose, Ps. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. Ps. 3. 1, 2, 3, &c.*

III. And now We are to consider the Words, as by way of Accommodation they may suitably express the Case of *other Nations, and other Princes*: And I believe you cannot but have all along observ'd a wonderful Agreement, in the main Particulars, of *David's Succession to the Israelitish Throne*; and that of *Our now (most Dear) Sovereign, to the Throne of these Kingdoms*. Of *Him*, as born upon this happy Day, We are henceforth to speak, To pass by all that was done before his Time, to those most Royal and Illustrious Ancestors of his, the Protestant *King and Queen of BOHEMIA*; who perhaps, might fare the worse, because so unanimously and entirely lov'd and honour'd by the good old *Puritans*, and by all sincere *Protestants*: I say, to pass by this, and the other Hardships put upon the Family in consequence of this; We shall confine ourselves to *the Life of this Great Prince*; and chiefly to *the Time since this Illustrious Family have been by the Laws appointed for the Succession*.

One thing only should not be forgotten by Us, especially upon *this Day*; and that is, that on this Day *Fifty-nine Years* ago, when Our Fathers were calling

Home to the Throne *a Race of Princes*, who soon after went directly into those *Popish* and *Arbitrary* Measures, which would have been Our Ruin ; that We might not always and utterly be undone, a Wise and Good Providence kindly took Care for Us, that *at that very time, this great Protestant Prince*, Our now glorious *Sovereign*, should be born into the World.

Many Years he had been in the World, before it was generally remember'd or known, that the *Illustrious House* were so nearly related to the *British Throne* ; and that they were the only *Protestant Branch* of the Royal Family, that could give Us the Prospect of *a lasting Succession*.

But after that good King WILLIAM, of most glorious and immortal Memory, had first prevail'd to have the legal Succession fixed *in this Family* (which *Legacy* of his, by some, will never be forgiven :) And after it had receiv'd yet further Force from some other *Acts*, pass'd in the earlier Years of the Queen ; and the whole Nation had been obliged to *swear to* the Succession ; and it was by Law made *Treason* to oppose it : Who ever would have thought a Time would still come, wherein both this *Person* and *Family* would be treated with Contempt ! and their *Title* call'd in Question by every sorry Scribbler ! and this not only generally with *Impunity* ; but sometimes plainly with a *Reward*. Witness, among a Multitude of others, that vile Paper, which every Week was stuff'd with

with the most flagrant Treason against the Succession, under the Title of *The Examiner*.

Nor was it only the Press, but *Pulpits* also were employ'd to spread the Doctrines of *Non-Resistance* and *Passive-Obedience*, how ridiculous soever in themselves, yet artfully enough calculated to oppose the Succession; and since at that time they were a very rude and unmannerly Reflection upon the *Queen* herself; it cannot be suppos'd, that those who were then in Power ever would have suffer'd, much less encourag'd them, had it not been that these Doctrines (should they once prevail) would for ever extinguish the Hopes of a *Protestant Succession*.

The Steps that were plainly taken for that Purpose, by those that were in the Ministry, in the last Years of the Queen, were very large and open ones. The dismal Scene begun in laying aside the wisest and most faithful Ministry that ever any *English* Sovereign had been bless'd with. No Reason ever was assign'd for it, but what was worse than none, namely, *meer Will and Pleasure*. "The *Queen* may change her Servants when she pleaserh." 'Tis true, a *Sovereign* is not oblig'd always to continue any Person in his Service, only because He once happen'd to be taken in; He certainly has a Right, which the *Head* of every *private Family* enjoys, to change his Servants. But then there is this remarkable Difference, that what is done in a *private Family*, is the Concern of that Family only; and the

Changes that are made in it, whether they be wise or foolish, themselves only are affected by them; and suppose the worst, whatever Damage may have been done by one Change, when once perceiv'd, may soon and easily be set to rights by another. But the Affairs of *Nations* are not only of vastly greater Importance, but much more extensive, and more intricate and involv'd; if these are once out of course, they are not easily to be retriev'd; great and innumerable Mischiefs follow, if here there be a rash and unadvised Change; such as affect very many, and are likely to continue very long; A wise Sovereign therefore, when he changes Hands, will not do it in Jest, but with due Deliberation, and upon very weighty Reasons. But here a Change was made; if there was any Reason for it, it must be what would not bear the hearing, since to this Day it never was assign'd: Yet they must surely, in so great an Affair, act with some Design in view; or else they did they knew not What. Now after so many Years, which they have had for Recollection, let them, or any Friends of theirs (if they are able) say, what was, or possibly could be the Design of those Changes; unless it was to serve the Pretender, and overturn the Succession establish'd by Law.

Upon this Change of the Ministry follows the Disgrace and Removal of the Greatest and most Successful GENERAL, not of that only, but perhaps of any Age. A General, who had universally the Esteem

Esteem and Hearts of the whole Army: A *General*, who so well concerted all his Schemes, that in the Course of near a *Ten Year's War*, none of 'em ever did miscarry; He never fought any *One Battle*, but He gain'd the Victory; nor ever once laid *Siege* to any (the strongest and most important) *Fortress* of the Enemy, which He did not enter and take Possession of. The true Reason why He was remov'd, may be plainly seen, in the Choice they made of *One* who was to succeed Him in that critical Juncture. *One*, who enter'd with all the Advantages that could be wish'd for, to give the finishing Stroke to that Great Work, which was almost done to His Hand; who had the Opportunity, in *One Day*, to put an happy End to the War which had lasted so many Years; but this was none of His Business; instead of this, He, at that very Time, basely deserts Our good Allies, and gives up 40,000 of their brave Troops to be perfectly murder'd by the Enemy. *One*, who, instead of joining His Arms and Counsels with Our Friends, did traiterously correspond with, and take his Measures from those with Whom We were at Open War. The Consequence of which was, not only the *Loss* of more Towns *that Year*, than had by fair (tho' successful) fighting been gain'd in *two or three Years* before: But a most *scandalous Peace*, which gave up almost all the Advantages of a *Ten Years* successful War at once; and sold all the Blood and Treasure, that had been the Purchase of those Successes, for what was next to Nothing. Yet such Proceedings, *monstrous* as they seem, were

Politick

Politick enough ; upon Supposal, that the Design of those who then were in the Ministry, was not to reduce the then exorbitant Power of *France* ; but effectually to prevent the Succession of the House of *Hanover*.

And that this was the Design then in Hand, was but too plain from every thing that now pass'd at Court : There, none were now well look'd upon, but those who either were openly Enemies to the *Protestant-Succession* ; or, at least, very cool and indifferent in their Friendship for it. Will it ever be forgotten, how dishonourably those Great Men [the Baron *Bothmar*, and Baron *Schutz*] were forbid the Court ; only for bravely executing their Trust, as Envoys from the *Illustrious House* ? when, about the same Time, Sir *Patrick Lawless*, (an *Irish* Papist, an Exile, and a declar'd Traytor) was closeted with the Queen for Hours together : None can tell why, unless it was, that He came from a Person better lov'd and more respected ; in plain Words, I mean, unless He was the *Pretender's* Envoy. Nay, We have some Reason to believe, that the *Pretender* himself in Person was caress'd and complimented at *Somerset-House*, if not at *St. James's* too.

And when, at vast Expence, they had gain'd a Majority in the *House of Commons* to their Mind ; by what they did, it was not hard to find out what was intended to be done. The *Friends* of the Succession, who were in the *Establish'd Church*, were not so immediately within their Reach : But
the

the poor *Dissenters* were therefore the more barbarously to be us'd. Fresh Brands of Infamy and Reproach are now fix'd upon them; as if they were not fit for any Trusts. Upon this, they are first stripp'd of *their Property*, and Places which many of 'em had purchas'd with all they had in the World; and which was All they had wherewith to subsist themselves and Families: This was done by the *Occasional Bill*. And some time after, they ventur'd yet a great Way farther; now by the *Schism Bill*, they violently wrest their *Children* out of the Parents Hands; and will appoint and direct by Whom, and in what Way they shall be educated and form'd. And had not God most seasonably interpos'd, the next Thing to be done, was what would forever have fix'd upon them what was already done; One Bill more (which they had ready) to take away the Dissenter's *Right of Voting* in all Elections.

And now, why all this very hard Usage, almost without a Precedent! why should a large, a numerous Body of Innocent, Industrious, Useful Men, be thus treated and dealt with! Men, whom they could not charge with any fault! and who did distinguishingly deserve the Character of *those that were quiet in the Land*, Psal. 35. 20. Their only Crime, for which they suffer'd all this was, that (to a Man) they were zealously in the Interest of the *Protestant Succession*: as they were none of 'em brib'd into it, so neither were they to be brib'd
nor

nor frightened from it ; for both Methods had been tried with 'em : It therefore was resolv'd, that they should severely smart, for this *their steady* ('twas then call'd *sawcy*) Adherence to the House of Han-
over.

There is one Thing more by no means to be overlook'd, and that was, that the *Succession* itself had by Parliament been left *precarious*, if not then *chang'd* ; only it was prevented by the surprizing (but for Us Happy) Majority of *one single Vote*.

This was the State of Things among Us, for more than four of the last Years of the Queen : all that Time, it was but too plain, the *Succession* was the Grievance to those in Power, and what they wanted to get rid of : The Language of all they said and did, to every careful Observer, plainly was, " We will not have *this* Man [*this* House] to " reign over Us." And when We look back, and see how very near they were to the Point they were to gain ; and how narrowly We have escap'd the Danger which then threatned every Thing that was, or could be dear to Us as Men, as *Britons* ; or as Protestants ; to this very Day the Remembrance of it almost oversets Us : and the *Pain* We feel upon every fresh Thought of that *Gloomy Day* does and will mingle still with the *Joy* and *Transports* which We have by Reason of our surprizing and most pleasing *Deliverance*. Psal. 124, throughout, and Psal. 126.

And

And as the *Succession* in Our Time ran equal Hazards with that of *David*: So *David*, after his *Accession*, did not meet with more Sons of *Belial* than Our *present Sovereign* (the best of Kings) has done. Was it ever known that *odious and vile Reflections*, (too vile to be repeated) should, without any Foundation in the World, be rais'd, and impudently and industriously spread throughout the Land, to rob a Prince and his whole Family of all their Honour; and this when He was actually upon the *Throne*, and possess'd of *Regal Power* as well as Dignity? Was it ever known before, that such *Numbers* should solemnly *Swear* to a Sovereign; only with Design by this Means to have it in their Power to distress and give Him trouble? But what exceeds all the rest is, that there should be *Clergy Men* (great Numbers of 'em) who by their own *Example* encourag'd the vile Practice; besides that many of 'em other Ways publicly taught their Friends, not only that they might break an *Unlawful Oath*; but (O horrid, and before unheard of Villany!) "that they might lawfully take the Oath to the Government which at that very Time they design'd to break: that the Pious End, meaning the overturning the Government, would sanctify the Act even of the most direct Perjury."

And while the Press and Pulpits have thus poison'd the People; and Commissions of the Peace, with other Offices, have by this Means been fill'd

with the King's Enemies : Is it at all to be wonder'd at, that We have almost every Year openly a *New Rebellion*? or is it not rather strange, that They have not prevail'd; since so many of those who have been possess'd of the *King's Authority*, have turn'd it altogether against Himself?

But I shall no longer dwell upon the *Dark* and *Melancholy Part* of the Subject. Tho' never was there a Prince in any Age, that had a better *Title* to a Crown, or was every way so *fitted* for it, and so *well-deserving* of it, as He who now wears the *British Crown*; yet never was there any Prince whose Case was more exactly suited to the Text: This Prince (if ever any other) is indeed *the Stone which the Builders refus'd*. But Thanks be to God, We have it now to add, *He is become the Head-stone of the Corner*. This indeed was the *Lord's Doing*, and ought to be *marvellous in our Eyes*, &c.

What remains will be a suitable Improvement of the whole Subject. And,

I. We may here learn, what is the *Place and Use* of a *good Prince*; and how great the Esteem and Honour is that We owe to such a One. This is what We have *learnt* Ourselves, and what We are always ready to *teach* Our Friends; to *Honour earthly Sovereigns*, according to the Place in which they stand; *Good Princes* are, all Sovereign Princes (by their Institution) were design'd to be [*in a Nation*] that which a *Corner-stone* is [*in a Building*];
nay,

may, as *the Head-stone of the Corner*; that is, they give both a *Beauty* and a *Firmness* to the whole Community. Therefore they are also call'd *the Shields of the Earth*, Ps. 47. 9. The Duty of their Office is, *to judge the People with Righteousness, and the Poor with Judgment, to judge the Poor of the People, to save the Children of the Needy, and to break in Pieces the Oppressor*, Ps. 72. 2, 4. As *Fathers* of their People, they are to *feed* and to *take care* of 'em, Ps. 78. 72. Not as *Tyrants*, to *devour* and make a *Prey* of 'em. Instead of laying farther and harder *Bonds* upon their People; they are to *break in Pieces every unrighteous and unreasonable Yoke*, which the *Iniquity* of former Times had laid upon 'em: They are to *loose the Bands of Wickedness, to undo the heavy Burdens, to let the oppress'd go free*: For they only can do it, and this is what God will have to be done, Is. 58. 6. Now when *Princes* do faithfully herein discharge the *Trust* committed to them, they are the *greatest Blessings* in the World; and it may then be truly said of them, *because the LORD loved such a Nation, therefore made He such an One to be King over them*, 1 King 10. 9. 2 Chron. 9. 8.

II. We may also learn, *When a good Prince is raised to the Throne, the greater the Difficulties were that lay in his Way to it, the more particularly is the Hand of GOD to be owned and adored in it. This is the LORD's Doing; and This is the Day which the LORD hath made.* In the Case which We this Day commemorate, We surely need not be told, *Where*

(and where only) *Our Help lay*: It was a Case gone altogether out of the Reach of Our own, and of all other *Humane Relief*. We felt it, we readily own'd it then, We pleaded it (in fervent Prayer) as an *Argument* to engage the *Divine Help*, Ps. 79. 8, 9. O let Us not forget it now.

III. While We observe His Hand in this blessed Revolution, it should give Us a suitable *Satisfaction and Pleasure*, that the Great God does still interpose in what relates to Us and to *Our Nation*. What a pleasant Thought should it be to Us, that God has not yet cast off Our Land! Earthly *Builders* had almost undone Us, not only for our own Time, but for all After-times too; but a Good God just stept in before it was too late; and let us see, and all the World about Us see, that tho' they had *begun to build* without Him, and had carried it on so far and so long alone; yet they should never *finish* what they had in Hand: Here He would *stay the Building*, at the very last. Thus did He seasonably shew both His watchful *Providence*, and His mighty *Power*: Thus did He say to those proud *Doers*, as to the proud *Waves*, "Hitherto shall ye go, but no further: and here shall ye be stay'd, Job 38. 11." And it is fit that all these *Under-Builders*, that manage the Affairs of States and Kingdoms, should begin to know that there is One above them; One that *sitteth in the Heavens*, and laughs at them, while they are laughing at all the World about them; One that doth whatever pleaseth Him, among the *Inhabitants of the Earth*, as well

well as in the Armies of Heaven. How well is it for Us, and How safe are we, because The LORD reigneth?

IV. Upon this it follows, that *the Spirit and Temper of such Builders is altogether unaccountable.* Why should they be uneasy or angry, at what GOD has done! And why do they still resolutely oppose this happy Prince and Settlement! To remove the *Head-Stone of the Corner*, if they could accomplish it, would be dangerous in the last Degree, it must terribly shake and shatter the whole Building; if not bury it, at last, in its own Ruines. How desperate is the Attempt, while herein they directly fight against GOD himself! And how certain is it, that in the Issue, it will still prove a fruitless One! Who ever did, Who ever shall, *harden Himself against GOD, and prosper?* Job 9. 4. God will always cloth such Men, and their Designs with Shame, Psal. 132. 18. *No Weapon form'd against him shall prosper*, Is. 54. 17. And it is He, that giveth Salvation unto Kings, who delivereth David, his Servant, from the hurtful Sword, Psal. 144. 10.

V. What remains then, but that We own this God, who has thus remarkably appeared for Us: let us build too in Our more private Way; let Us set up Our *Eben-ezer*; A Stone which we ought to lay as a thankful Memorial; and say, *Hitherto hath the LORD helped Us*, 1 Sam. 7. 12.

Let Us REJOICE, and be thankful for it: let Us rejoice in Him that made Us, let Us be joyful in Our King,

*King, Psal. 149. 2. let Us sing upon this Occasion,
O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for his
Mercy endureth for ever, Psal. 136. 1. He remembred
Us in Our low Estate ; and hath redeemed Us from Our
Enemies : for his Mercy endureth for ever, v. 23, 24.*

Let Us TRUST this God in all future Straits ;
*Trust Ye in the LORD for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah
is everlasting Strength, Is. 26. 4. And to add no
more,*

Let Us still by earnest fervent Prayer ENGAGE
this God to be still with Us. If ever he should
leave Us, Our Strength and Our Glory then de-
part from Us, whatever We have still left among
Us : *Except the LORD build the House, they labour in
vain that build it. Psal. 127. 1. But while GOD is
with Us, while He is for Us, We need not fear,
Whoever or Whatever is against Us : for in that
Case, Greater is He that is with Us [that is in Us],
than all that is in the World, 1 Jo. 4. 4.*



F I N I S.

